



Select Board

Regular Meeting

Tuesday November 17, 2020 @ 6:00pm

Via Zoom Remote Access

MINUTES

I. Chair Kristin Hutchins called the meeting to order at 6:09 pm;

Present: Board members Carolyn Ball, Snap Willey, Chad Terry, George Jellison.

Town Manager, Justin VanDongen; Town Clerk, Marilyn Lowell, and Deputy Code Officer Jesse Dunbar.

II. Visitors - None

III. Minutes of October 27, 2020.

Motion by Terry to accept the minutes of October 27, 2020 as presented. Second by Willey. Passed 5-0-0.

IV. Manager's Report:

Town Office Traffic- The traffic pattern has been changed at the Town Office with the installation of a new service window where the second entrance door is to the office. The office will be operating this way until further notice to limit the spread of Covid-19. The Manager informed the Board that the School Board was now meeting virtually until further notice. The Board had a discussion on the options for meeting remotely or in person. The consensus of the Board was to meet virtually until January and revisit the topic at that time. In regards to the rest of the Boards and Committees the Board agreed the decision on meetings should be left to those Boards and Committees to decide.

Emergency Services Update – The EMS Department heads, Fire Chiefs, and Town Managers met via zoom to discuss the issues facing the ambulance services, notably Southwest Harbor/Tremont Ambulance and the Northeast Harbor Ambulance. Southwest Harbor/Tremont Ambulance is struggling with staffing which is causing some strain on the Southwest Harbor Fire Department, as they respond to calls when the ambulance service is having a staffing issue. The Manager indicated that the discussion at budget time this year cannot be just about the money, but what does the town expect from the service, something needs to push the Southwest Harbor/Tremont Ambulance service to make a change. Hutchins, who serves on the ambulance Board, indicated the Board has discussed office renovations, raises, and recent changes to the billing process as possible improvements to the issues the service is facing. Hutchins indicated some staffing issues are a result of Covid-19, but moreover they simply cannot find people to work. The service is

reaching out to Northeast Harbor Ambulance to have a discussion about providing service across town lines.

Chris's Pond – The Manager along with Hutchins, Misha Mytar from Maine Coast Heritage Trust, and Jane Ayres-Peabody from the Conservation Committee met with a representative from the Land and Water Conservation Fund to discuss applying for a recreational grant for this project. The possibility of adding the Manset Town Dock redevelopment project to the grant was discussed and the representative indicated that would be fine to include on the same application. The Manager feels the in kind portion from the Manset project could offset the tax dollar funds for the project. The purpose of the grant is to develop outdoor recreational areas, both projects would meet this requirement. The maximum award is \$1,000,000.00 with a \$500,000 match. Ball and Mytar will be assisting with the grant application. The Manager suggested setting up a work group to make sure the application is turned in on time. The Manset project is expected to cost somewhere around \$500,000. The decision on the grant would come in September 2021. Hutchins indicated she felt it would be irresponsible of the Board not to at least pursue the grant.

Police Consolidation Update- We are still working on setting up the next meeting. The Manager is awaiting a response from the Manager's in Mount Desert and Bar Harbor once they speak with their Board/Council.

Harbormaster Update – Harbormaster Adam Thurston has resigned his position to take the Deputy Harbormaster position in Mount Desert, his last day will be November 25th, 2020.

VI. New Business

- a. Chief Brown Sick Pay – The Manager explained that the Personnel Policy states the Town will pay out 25% of the employees sick pay balance when an employee leaves in good standing after 10 years of service. Brown did not meet the years of service threshold but the Manager wanted the Board to make the decision based on the exceptional circumstance.
Motion by Ball to pay out 25% of Alan Brown's sick pay balance due to the exceptional circumstance. Second by Terry. Passed 5-0-0.
- b. Copay Health Insurance Deductible Increase – The town currently reimburses 50% of the deductible amounts, these amounts will be increasing in January and the Town Clerk needs to know if the Board would like to increase the amounts that the town reimburses to remain at 50%, or leave them at the amounts they are currently reimbursed at. The insurance premiums will not be increasing for 2021. The Manager estimates that the town would need to increase the HRA reserve budget line by 25% (\$12,000) in order to cover the increased deductible costs if that is to be the decision of the Board. Jellison stated he did not see any reason why the town should not increase the amount. This would be the year to do it seeing as there is no premium increase. After lengthy discussion it was determined that the Manager will redraft the personnel policy as the wording does not match the wording from our insurance plan, and the wording in the union contracts is more clear using the terms 2/3 and 1/3 split instead of dollar amounts.
- c. Discussion and Establishment of Marijuana Fee Schedule – The licensing fees around tend to average \$5000 with some as high as \$10,000. The Manager felt \$2500 would be appropriate for the licensing fee for a retail store. The Manager felt the increase to hours for Police, Code, and Admin would exceed the \$2500. Dunbar advised the Board should

also make a decision on an application fee, as not all applications will be granted a license, but would take resources to process. \$200 was a suggested amount. Jellison felt the application fee should be similar to the liquor license fee.

Motion by Hutchins to set the Marijuana Application fee at the same as the liquor license fee. Second by Willey. Passed 5-0-0.

Discussion was had on setting the renewal license fee at a lower rate than the initial license fee. The consensus of the Board was to think it over and make a decision at the November 24, 2020 meeting. Discussion was had on a few recommendations Ball had emailed the Manager in regards to the wording on the application.

Dunbar suggested January 26, 2021 as the deadline for submitting applications for the first round due to that date being 85 days from the time the Marijuana Ordinance was adopted. The Ordinance states the deadline shall be not less than 60 days and no more than 90 days.

Motion by Hutchins to set the deadline for marijuana applications for January 26, 2021. Second by Ball. Passed 5-0-0.

- d. Harbormaster Position – Harbormaster Adam Thurston resigned. The Manager is proposing to advertise for a Harbormaster position as well as a Deputy Harbormaster position. The Deputy Harbormaster position would be for two days in the summer and assisting public works in the winter. Ball indicated she like the idea. Both job descriptions were proposed to the Board, Ball suggested adding something about working closely with the public, working waterfront, and defending/preparing the budget. Jellison brought up the fact that Thurston is the towns Shellfish Warden, this should be added to the job description as well. The Manager said he would reach out to Thurston and see if he would be willing to stay on as Shellfish Warden until the new Harbormaster has been trained.

Motion by Ball to create the position of Deputy Harbormaster, beginning in June 2021. Second by Hutchins. Passed 4-1-0 with Jellison opposed.

VII. Old Business

- a. Town Garage – The Board opened the discussion up to the public and there was a lengthy discussion of comments and concerns from area residents about the possibility of the Town purchasing the 13 Mountain View Rd property. The Manager had a conversation with the owners regarding the asking price for the property, The price they are asking is \$575,000 with a lease term of 3 years with two 1 year extensions possible for the owner of one of the garage bays. The owners also offered the town the option to lease one bay this winter while the purchase is being worked out. Terry asked if the lease of the bay for the winter was contingent on the purchase, the Manager indicated it was. The Manager asked the Board to approve making an offer of \$525,000. Ball was in agreement. Jellison stated he did not want to move forward with the purchase now that he has more information and with the public opposition that has come out in the last two weeks. Terry indicated he was not comfortable with amount being above the upper limit he had in mind. Terry and Willey asked about the option to lease it for the winter. The Manager indicated that the infrastructure costs required would not be a wise investment if the Town is not purchasing the building. The Manager indicated he would need more time to provide the Board with alternative suggestions.

VIII. Other Business: The Downeast Covid-19 Task Force has drafted an informational letter being sent out to community members and wanted to know if the Board wanted the Town of Southwest Harbor listed as a member of the task force on the letter. The consensus of the Board was to include the Town on the letter.

IX. Accept

Motion by Terry to accept:

General Fund Warrants: FY 21 #45

Payroll Warrants: FY 21: #1105, #1112, #1119, #41, #43, and #44

School Warrants: FY 21 #42

Conservation Commission Warrants: FY 21 #1114

Second by Willey. Passed 5-0-0

X. Adjourn

Motion by Terry to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 pm. Second by Willey. Passed 5-0-0

JD